

What is claimed is:

Sub A1/ 1. A method for use in a client-server interactive television program guide system comprising:  
providing a user with an opportunity to define user preferences using an interactive television program guide client that is implemented on user television equipment, without requiring the user to navigate the Internet;

providing the user preferences to a program guide server; and

providing program guide data to the program guide client according to the user preferences.

2. The method defined in claim 1 further comprising:

generating a viewing recommendation based on the user preferences with the program guide server; and

displaying the user preferences with the interactive television program guide client on the user television equipment.

3. The method defined in claim 1 wherein providing a user with an opportunity to define user preferences comprises providing a user with an opportunity to designate a preference level for a plurality of preference attributes.

4. The method defined in claim 1 further comprising providing software to the program guide client according to the user preferences.

5. The system defined in claim 1 further comprising providing Internet links to the program guide client according to the user preferences.

6. A method for use in a client-server interactive television program guide system for scheduling reminders according to user defined expressions, comprising:

providing a user with an opportunity to define an expression with an interactive television program guide client implemented on user television equipment without requiring the user to navigate the Internet;

storing the expression on a program guide server;

processing the expression with the program guide server to find programs that satisfy the expression; and

scheduling with the program guide server reminders for programs that satisfy the expression.

7. The method defined in claim 6 wherein scheduling with the program guide server reminders for programs that satisfy the expression comprises providing at least one message from the program guide server to the program guide client before each of the programs that satisfy the expression begin.

8. The method defined in claim 6 wherein scheduling with the program guide server reminders for programs that satisfy the expression comprises providing program identifiers for each of the programs

that satisfy the expression from the program guide server to the program guide client.

9. A method for use in a client-server interactive television program guide system for scheduling programs for recording according to user defined expressions, comprising:

providing a user with an opportunity to define an expression with an interactive television program guide client implemented on user television equipment without requiring the user to navigate the Internet;

storing the expression on a program guide server;

processing the expression with the program guide server to find programs that satisfy the expression; and

scheduling with the program guide server the programs that satisfy the expression for recording.

10. The method defined in claim 9 wherein scheduling with the program guide server the programs that satisfy the expression for recording comprises scheduling with the program guide server the programs that satisfy the expression for recording by the user television equipment.

11. The method defined in claim 9 wherein scheduling with the program guide server the programs that satisfy the expression for recording comprises scheduling with the program guide server the programs that satisfy the expression for recording by the program guide server.

12. A method for use in a client-server interactive television program guide system for parentally controlling programs according to user defined expressions, comprising:

providing a user with an opportunity to define an expression with an interactive television program guide client implemented on user television equipment without requiring the user to navigate the Internet;

storing the expression on a program guide server;

processing the expression with the program guide server to find programs that satisfy the expression; and

locking with the program guide server programs that satisfy the expression.

13. The method defined in claim 12 wherein locking with the program guide server programs that satisfy the expression comprises indicating to the program guide client that the programs that satisfy the expression are locked.

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14. A method for use in a client-server interactive television program guide system for tracking a user's viewing history, comprising:

tracking a user's viewing history;

storing the user's viewing history on a program guide server;

finding programs with the program guide server that are consistent with the user's viewing history; and

indicating on user television equipment the programs found by the program guide server that are consistent with the user's viewing history and that the

A2

user has not watched, with an interactive television program guide client implemented on the user television equipment.

15. The method defined in claim 14 wherein storing the user's viewing history comprises storing a user defined expression with the program guide server.

16. The method defined in claim 14 wherein storing the user's viewing history comprises calculating user demographic values with the program guide server.

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17. The method defined in claim 14 further comprising:

providing a user with an opportunity to define a user preference profile with the interactive television program guide client implemented on user television equipment;

storing the user preference profile on a program guide server; and

finding programs with the program guide server that are consistent with the user preference profile, wherein:

indicating on user television equipment the programs found by the program guide server that are consistent with the user's viewing history and that the user has not watched comprises indicating on user television equipment the programs found by the program guide server that are consistent with the user's viewing history and the user preference profile and that the user has not watched.

18. The method defined in claim 14 further comprising:

targeting advertising with the program guide server based on the user's viewing history; and displaying the advertising with the interactive television program guide client on the user television equipment.

19. The method defined in claim 14 further comprising collecting program ratings information with the program guide server based on the user's viewing history.

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20. A client-server interactive television program guide system comprising:

means for providing a user with an opportunity to define user preferences using an interactive television program guide client that is implemented on user television equipment, without requiring the user to navigate the Internet;

means for providing the user preferences to a program guide server; and

means for providing program guide data from the program guide server to the program guide client according to the user preferences.

21. The system defined in claim 20 further comprising:

means for generating a viewing recommendation based on the user preferences with the program guide server; and

means for displaying the user preferences with the interactive television program guide client on the user television equipment.

22. The system defined in claim 20 wherein the means for providing a user with an opportunity to

define user preferences comprises means for providing a user with an opportunity to designate a preference level for a plurality of preference attributes.

23. The system defined in claim 20 further comprising means for providing software from the program guide server to the program guide client according to the user preferences.

24. The system defined in claim 20 further comprising means for providing Internet links from the program guide server to the program guide client according to the user preferences.

25. A client-server interactive television program guide system for scheduling reminders according to user defined expressions, comprising:

means for providing a user with an opportunity to define an expression with an interactive television program guide client implemented on user television equipment, without requiring the user to navigate the Internet;

means for processing the expression with a program guide server to find programs that satisfy the expression; and

means for scheduling with the program guide server reminders for programs that satisfy the expression.

26. The system defined in claim 25 wherein the means for scheduling with the program guide server reminders for programs that satisfy the expression comprises means for providing at least one message from the program guide server to the program guide client

before each of the programs that satisfy the expression begin.

27. The system defined in claim 25 wherein the means for scheduling with the program guide server reminders for programs that satisfy the expression comprises means for providing program identifiers for each of the programs that satisfy the expression from the program guide server to the program guide client.

28. A client-server interactive television program guide system for scheduling programs for recording according to user defined expressions, comprising:

means for providing a user with an opportunity to define an expression with an interactive television program guide client implemented on user television equipment, without requiring the user to navigate the Internet;

means for processing the expression with a program guide server to find programs that satisfy the expression; and

means for scheduling with the program guide server the programs that satisfy the expression for recording.

29. The system defined in claim 28 wherein the means for scheduling with the program guide server the programs that satisfy the expression for recording comprises means for scheduling with the program guide server the programs that satisfy the expression for recording by the user television equipment.

30. The system defined in claim 28 wherein the means for scheduling with the program guide server



the programs that satisfy the expression for recording comprises means for scheduling with the program guide server the programs that satisfy the expression for recording by the program guide server.

31. A client-server interactive television program guide system for parentally controlling programs according to user defined expressions, comprising:

means for providing a user with an opportunity to define an expression with an interactive television program guide client implemented on user television equipment, without requiring the user to navigate the Internet;

means for processing the expression with a program guide server to find programs that satisfy the expression; and

means for locking with the program guide server programs that satisfy the expression.

32. The system defined in claim 31 wherein the means for locking with the program guide server programs that satisfy the expression comprises means for indicating to the program guide client that the programs that satisfy the expression are locked.

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33. A client-server interactive television program guide system for tracking a user's viewing history, comprising:

means for tracking a user's viewing history with a program guide server;

means for indicating on user television equipment programs that are consistent with the user's viewing history and that the user has not watched, with

A5

an interactive television program guide client implemented on the user television equipment.

34. The system defined in claim 33 wherein the means for tracking the user's viewing history comprises means for storing a user defined expression with the program guide server.

35. The system defined in claim 33 wherein the means for tracking the user's viewing history comprises means for calculating user demographic values with the program guide server.

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36. The system defined in claim 33 further comprising:

means for providing a user with an opportunity to define a user preference profile with the interactive television program guide client implemented on user television equipment; and

means for finding programs with the program guide server that are consistent with the user preference profile, wherein:

the means for indicating on user television equipment the programs found by the program guide server that are consistent with the user's viewing history and that the user has not watched comprises means for indicating on user television equipment the programs found by the program guide server that are consistent with the user's viewing history and the user preference profile and that the user has not watched.

37. The system defined in claim 36 further comprising:

means for targeting advertising with the program guide server based on the user's viewing history; and

means for displaying the advertising with the interactive television program guide client on the user television equipment.

38. The system defined in claim 36 further comprising means for collecting program ratings information with the program guide server based on the user's viewing history.

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39. A client-server interactive television program guide system comprising:  
a program guide server;  
user television equipment on which an interactive television program guide client is implemented, wherein the interactive television program guide client is programmed to provide a user with an opportunity to define user preferences without requiring the user to navigate the Internet; and  
a communications path over which the user preferences are provided by the interactive television program guide client to the program guide server.

40. The system defined in claim 39 wherein:  
the program guide server is programmed to generate a viewing recommendation based on the user preferences; and

the interactive television program guide client is further programmed to display the viewing recommendation on the user television equipment.

41. The system defined in claim 39 wherein the interactive television program guide client is further programmed to provide a user with an opportunity to designate a preference level for a plurality of preference attributes.

42. The system defined in claim 39 wherein the program guide server is programmed to provide software to the interactive television program guide client according to the user preferences.

43. The system defined in claim 39 wherein the program guide server is programmed to provide Internet links to the interactive television program guide client according to the user preferences.

44. A client-server interactive television program guide system for scheduling reminders according to user defined expressions, comprising:

user television equipment on which an interactive television program guide client is implemented, wherein the program guide client is programmed to provide a user with an opportunity to define an expression without requiring the user to navigate the Internet;

a communications path over which the expression is provided by the interactive television program guide client to a program guide server, wherein the program guide server is programmed to find programs that satisfy the expression and schedule reminders for programs that satisfy the expression.

45. The system defined in claim 44 wherein scheduling with the program guide server reminders for programs that satisfy the expression comprises

providing at least one message from the program guide server to the program guide client before each of the programs that satisfy the expression begin.

46. The system defined in claim 44 wherein the program guide server is further programmed to provide program identifiers for each of the programs that satisfy the expression to the interactive television program guide client over the communications path.

47. A client-server interactive television program guide system for scheduling programs for recording according to user defined expressions, comprising:

user television equipment on which an interactive television program guide client is implemented, wherein the interactive television program guide client is programmed to provide a user with an opportunity to define an expression without requiring the user to navigate the Internet;

a communications path over which the expression is provided by the interactive television program guide client to a program guide server, wherein the program guide server is programmed to find programs that satisfy the expression and schedule the programs that satisfy the expression for recording.

48. The system defined in claim 47 wherein:  
the user television equipment comprises a storage device; and

the program guide server is further programmed to schedule the programs that satisfy the expression for recording by the storage device.

49. The system defined in claim 47 wherein the program guide server comprises a storage device on which the programs that satisfy the expression are stored.

50. A client-server interactive television program guide system for parentally controlling programs according to user defined expressions, comprising:

user television equipment on which an interactive television program guide client is implemented, wherein the interactive television program guide client is programmed to provide a user with an opportunity to define an expression without requiring the user to navigate the Internet;

a communications path over which the interactive television program guide client provides the expression to a program guide server, wherein the program guide server is programmed to find programs that satisfy the expression and lock programs that satisfy the expression.

51. The system defined in claim 50 wherein the program guide server is programmed to indicate to the interactive television program guide client the locked programs over the communications path; and

the interactive television program guide client is further programmed to indicate to the user the locked programs with the user television equipment.

52. A client-server interactive television program guide system for tracking a user's viewing history, comprising:

user television equipment on which an interactive television program guide client is

implemented, wherein the interactive television program guide client is programmed to provide viewing history information to a program guide server over a communications path, wherein:

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the program guide server is programmed to find programs based on the viewing history information and to indicate the programs to the interactive television program guide client over the communications path; and

the interactive television program guide client is further programmed to indicate on the user television equipment a subset of the programs wherein the subset of the programs are programs that the user has not watched.

53. The system defined in claim 52 wherein the program guide server is further programmed to calculate user demographic values based on the viewing history information.

54. The system defined in claim 52 wherein:  
the interactive television program guide client is further programmed to provide user preference information to the program guide server over the communications path; and

the program guide server is further programmed to obtain programs based on the user preference information and to indicate the programs to the interactive television program guide client.

55. The system defined in claim 54 wherein:  
the program guide server is programmed to target advertisements based on the user preference information and to provide the advertisements to the

interactive television program guide client over the communications path; and

the interactive television program guide client is further programmed to display the advertisements on the user television equipment.

56. The system defined in claim 54 wherein the program guide server is further programmed to collect program ratings information based on the viewing history information.